

The Classical Bulletin

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OCTOBER, 1931

No. 1

The Ninth Book of the Aeneid

It is unfortunate that in our discussions of the *Aeneid* we have made the expression "the last six books" a consecrate phrase; unfortunate, because the practice of referring to these books as *the last six books* has carried with it the rather disparaging implication that they weight no more in combination than if they were a seventh and final book, on a par in general import with any single book that precedes. When we recall that in the interests of unity the poet radically rearranged and condensed the multifarious details that tradition had woven into this part of the Aeneas legend, we realize that this view is not without some foundation in fact. Moreover, it is against an ever-changing background that the Greco-Trojan "wars and filial faith and Dido's pyre" front our view, and that over a span of years; the action of the latter half of the poem, on the contrary, is confined to a few square miles of little Latium, and its days hardly number more than the years of the first half. Yet our disparaging implication makes us appear more interested in the engaging sights along the way, than in Aeneas' destination and purpose—*dum conderet urbem*. It ignores the fact that only in the last half of the poem do the narrative theme—*Arma virumque*—and the spiritual theme—*Tantae molis erat*—blossom into full flower and redeem the promises of the introduction.

Book Nine has a function and an individuality all its own. Arrived at this point of his story, Vergil well knew that he could no longer leave the portrait of Aeneas unfinished, no longer leave the portrait of Aeneas' rival unpainted, without creating the impression that the conflict was merely the struggle of two armies. He well knew that this would fall far short of the impression which alone could be created by two giant characters, each the protagonist of a clearly defined cause. He well knew that, in writing the epic of Rome, it was his to set up "thunderbolt" Turnus as the champion of the crude civilization of early Italy, and to unite in the person of Aeneas a rugged warrior, plus the newer Stoic sage, righteous, *pius*, the ideal Roman—"cecini pascua, rura, duces." Book Nine fulfils its function in giving us a compelling picture of the *audacia* that is Turnus.

Symphonic structure is one of the two features that give Book Nine its individuality. The first movement, an energetic *allegro*, sees Turnus and his cohorts attack the Trojan ships, which are thereupon changed by Cybele into nymphs, and float away. The famous second movement—the *andante* in the subdominant—is sung in large part by muted strings that befit the quiet of night. Nisus

and Euryalus volunteer to pick their way through the enemy's lines. They are successful at first, but a misstroke brings about their capture, and pensive Vergil is at his best in the minor melody which narrates their death and its aftermath. The third movement, marked by a return of the brass and the percussion, gives us an attack on the Trojan camp, which includes the crash of one of the great towers. There is a quieter theme to introduce Ascanius for the moment, but this is hardly more than an interlude leading up to the finale. The third and fourth movements are played without pause, the latter being announced only by the return of full orchestra that accompanies the defiant opening of the gates, and the transfer of the fighting from without to within the camp. Here, to the sustained accompaniment of full orchestra, Turnus makes havoc among his foes, retiring at length when Trojan leaders rally their forces. The workmanship and use of material here are—simply Vergilian. In a book all of conflict, Vergil avoids monotony with the same studied proportion of light and shade, the same unity-and-variety, which marks his treatment of the whole war in Latium. Our attention alternately shifts from Rutulian to Trojan, and what little respite or advantage the Trojans gain, is told where it best offsets the success of their foes. No monotony wears on the reader with an eye for details such as the demise of Cretheus, that minstrel who—

*Semper equos atque arma virum pugnascue
canebat* (777).

The other feature that contributes to the distinctive individuality of Book Nine is the absence of Aeneas. In deciding to portray Turnus in this book, Vergil was compelled to remove Aeneas from the scene. Not until the tremendous duel of the twelfth book must the two *duces* meet. But there is no *deus ex machina* to carry Aeneas off. His departure from camp in the eighth book (which is contemporaneous in action with the ninth) arises from the straits in which his Trojans find themselves: the once friendly Latins have turned enemies with the transfer of power from their king, Latinus, to young Turnus (vii 600, 618), and Aeneas is off to enlist the aid of Evander. This is not the place to continue the long concatenation of causes and effects, and to point out the dramatic purposes which Vergil makes them subserve. Aeneas is gone, and Vergil and Turnus seize the opportunity. Aeneas is gone, and the general hue and cry for his return inspires the venture of Nisus and Euryalus. Aeneas is gone, and the young Ascanius

steps in to replace him, as Glover would have it, and to supply his *pietas*. The absence of Aeneas hangs oppressively over camp and story, and like a mysterious spell saps the strength and spirits of the Trojans until, at the close of the book, we find a whole troop of them giving ground before a single foe, Turnus. Juno's messenger, Iris, strikes the keynote of the book at its very beginning (6-13), and no succeeding line is out of tune with it. Does Vergil's reader, like the Trojans, come to appreciate Aeneas fully only in his absence?

The absence of Aeneas, then, leaves the stage clear for the exploits of that Achilles on Latin soil who is to be the last and greatest obstacle to the founding of a city and the establishment of the Roman race. The reader has waited for him; there has been no one quite like him thus far in the narrative. Queen Dido is the one personage who has done most to keep Aeneas from his mission, and she is long since out of the picture. Turnus' appearance in Book Nine marks the beginning of a long crescendo in the catalogue of his exploits; let us make his acquaintance by following him through these two days of conflict.

Turnus shows to advantage from the first. No sooner has Iris revealed to him his opportunity, than he is up and off and at the leaderless Trojan camp. With an encouraging challenge to those whom his Thracian charger has outsped, he cries—for he is a leader of men—:

"Ecquis erit, mecum, iuvenes, qui primus in hostem—?" (51)

and casts his spear as prelude of the fray. That is drama. When his foe refuses to give battle, the resourceful Turnus forces the issue by firing their fleet. The metamorphosis of the ships brings a sudden end to this attempt; but can even divine intervention baffle him? Though "all stand aghast, Messapus quails, and Tiber checks his tide, yet fails not the daring Turnus." To him obstacles are an inspiration, and he at once communicates that inspiration to his men in a vigorous address, which fairly rings with the stings of his foes' utter defeat at their native Troy (128-158). Magnificent rhetoric this, where Vergil's best artistry is surprised to find itself competing with the indomitable courage of this character of its own creation for the applause which no reader is able to withhold. Next day it is the fire-brand of Turnus which brings down a Trojan tower, and his strength and scorn alike are felt as he is upon the fugitive Lyeus with the taunt,

Nostrasne evadere, demens, sperasti te posse manus? (560-1)

News that the defiant Trojans have flung open the gates of the camp so arouses the ire of the great Rutulian that in a trice the two gatemen have been its victims (691 ff.). Within the camp, with the gates closed behind him, he prefers to carry on the combat single-handed, rather than open the gates to his comrades outside, and the feats of valor which follow are worthy of Calliope's aid in their telling. When, however, the Trojans rally,

Vergil is faced with the task of finding honorable retreat for this hero of uncounted duels: his strength is waning, and Juno comes not to his rescue. "As an angry lion, held at bay with galling javelins, half in fright, but grim and glowering, step by step gives way," so Turnus quits the fight, backing slowly toward the river, and when spears press him at every point, accoutred as he is, he plunges in, and, like Horatius Cocles, swims his picturesque escape.

In this masterly pen picture of Turnus' daring, a picture which extends from his prompt response to Iris' inspiration down to the highly dramatic gesture with which Book Nine closes, Vergil gives us a hero who so compels our admiration—precisely as Aeneas has *not* done—that our allegiance is ready to follow our admiration and desert the hapless Trojans. But Homer's standard of mere physical prowess will not suffice for Vergil's hero. Both of Vergil's champions are men of heroic stature; indeed, "Turnus is the peer of Aeneas in strength and courage," but Vergil uses inner-motivation to differentiate them, and it is in this that Turnus fails. A wary reader will see in the Rutulian's own words a foreshadowing of his fall. The only such hint we have thus far in the poem. The will of heaven has just been made manifest in the metamorphosis of the Trojan ships, and all bow their acknowledgment save Turnus:

Nil me fatalia terrent . . . responsa deorum (133),

proud words, which find their counterpart only late in the final act:

Di me terrent et Iuppiter hostis (xii 895),

which bears out the prediction of the abdicating Latinus:

Te, Turne, nefas, te triste manebit supplicium, votisque deos venerabere seris (vii 596-7).

Turnus is too rude, too proud, too self-confident to realize that not even a giant can war against the gods, and Vergil, pious like his chosen hero, makes it plain in the sequel that this consideration outweighs all others. *Audax Turnus* must inevitably yield to *pious Aeneas*.

The "fairy tale" in the beginning of Book Nine (77-122), like its complement sequel in Book Ten (215 ff.), gives us a very pretty picture. Some object to it on the ground that epics should be made of sterner stuff, calling attention to Vergil's own "apology" for the story,

Prisca fides facto, sed fama perennis (79).

While we shall not presume to utter an *ex cathedra* statement on the proper fiber and weave of the epic, the story does seem to have at least the utilitarian value of setting in relief that one trait of Turnus, indicated above, without which Vergil would hardly have been justified in bringing such a powerful character down to final defeat.

Just as the activities of Turnus in this book are divided to form two scenes, which bracket the Nisus-Euryalus episode, so the second of these scenes is divided, and brackets another Trojan exploit, Ascanius'

baptism of fire. Taking his cue from Turnus, the braggart Numanus Remulus indulges in a long speech to extol Rutulian prowess and to fling history in the teeth of his foes (598-620). Impatient of this, Ascanius breathes a prayer to Jove and sends an arrow through the boaster's head. It is his first display of valor in arms, and Apollo voices divine approval in the best-known line in the book,

*Macte nova virtute, puer, sic itur ad astra,
dis genite et geniture deos* (641-2).

No more than the "fairy tale," can this incident pass without criticism. Its position in the book shows Vergil's customary care for balance and symmetry; not so, however, the structure of the incident itself. The sharp tongue of Remulus and the disguise of Apollo take too much attention from the young prince, while the words are out of all proportion to the action; for instead of a hot pursuit, say, followed by a hand-to-hand engagement, Remulus' stream of mouthings preludes—the shooting of a single arrow! True, it is Ascanius' maiden venture in battle; he gets his man, and justice is pleased that he makes the boaster swallow his own taunts, yet Aeneas' son has won his way into our hearts no more than has his father, and we do not relish Apollo's *cetera parcé, puer, bello*. Has Ascanius only this intervention to thank for the fact that he alone, of all Vergil's young men, escapes an early death? Considered solely in itself, the incident is disappointing, but, like the transformation of the ships, it must not be considered solely in itself. Ascanius is the darling of the army, if not of the reader. The courage with which his feat animates the beleaguered Trojans is directly responsible for an otherwise inexplicable error in tactical strategy, contravening the express command of the absent Aeneas; for Pandarus and Bitias are inspirited to open the gates in defiance to the foe, and this invites the prompt reappearance of Turnus and marks the beginning of the finale, his *tour de force*. The few moments when this grim warrior is not the center of attention are merely pauses in his achievements.

St. Marys, Kansas WM. R. HENNES, S. J.
(To be continued)

Greek Tragedy

Lacordaire says somewhere that to every man who is seriously interested in Christ, there comes a day when the reality of Christ as God and Man fully dawns upon him. For years, perhaps, he had been following voices which said to him: "Lo! here is Christ," or "Lo! there is Christ," only to find that none of them ever led him all the way to the Holy Grail.

We trust there will be no irreverence in making a reference to Greek Tragedy under a similar aspect. To the student who is seriously interested in Greek Tragedy, there also comes a day when its real significance and true greatness fully open before him. For some years, perhaps, he had been listening to the books, which said to him: "Lo! here is Greek Tragedy"—"Lo! there is

Greek Tragedy," only to find that even the guides cannot always reach the summit of Parnassus. This must not be misunderstood, however: the guides are indeed essential to the climb; but when the final ascent is reached, they can only point out the path, for there is no room for two on the summit. No, no guide can read Greek Tragedy for you; you must read it for yourself. Read, read!—in translation, if you cannot read the originals. Then at last, when you have read and reread, pondered and pondered again, there will come a day when your vision will clarify: the clouds and mists of the first days on the summit will all have cleared away, and in the glistening meads of Colonus you will see the tree-tops where the nightingales perch. There, too, will be the "golden acres of corn," where Harmony, "sown as the flowers," yielded to the Midas touch of a master hand. And in the fields, among the golden cornstalks, will be desecrated the wonderful work that is Man.

R. C. W.

"Memento Homo"

(Ballad)

All hoarded gold shall change to rust.	Aerugo perdit, quos colis, aureos;
Proud titles Death shall spurn.	Spernit superbos Mors titulos
"Remember, man, thou art but dust;	ferox.
To dust thou shalt return."	"Vae, pulveris proles, memento, Pulveris in cineres redibis!"
Nor king, nor serf, when Death shall call,	Quam Mors vocabit, nec sibi servulus
A privilege may crave;	Nec rex favores flagitet inso-
For royalty must don the pall—	lens:
The pall that robes the slave.	Rex induetur tunc eodem Tegmine quo famulus misellus!
Earth passes, yet remains the soul	Solventur artus: ast animae manet
For life beyond the tomb.	Vitale robur; metaque sit tua
Let bliss eternal be thy goal;	Vitae futurae sors beata;
Beware the sinner's doom!	Fata cave male-contumaciae.
Alone endureth virtue's worth;	Mercede virtus sola beabitur;
All else relinquish now.	Prudens relinques tu modo ce-
Vain are the pride and pomp of earth;	tera:
To Death they needs must bow.	Sunt vana mundi pompa, fas-
	tus:
	Imperio peritura Mortis.
Like arrow's flight in yielding air;	Sicut sagittae transitus aëre,
Like rain-drops in the sea;	Guttae pluentis mistio cum
Earth's glories all shall vanish there,	mari,
Where looms eternity.	Vitae recedunt sic honores Te subeunte perennitatem!
J. C. RENO, S. J.	A. F. GEYSER, S. J.
St. Louis, Mo.	Prairie du Chien, Wis.

Perhaps no poetry has ever been written which contains in such perfection (as the Georgics of Vergil) richness of color with purity of line, which is so exquisite in its transitions and so suave in its modulations.—*Mackail*.

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Vol. VIII

OCTOBER, 1931

No. 1

Editorial

At this year's convention of the Jesuit Educational Association held at Loyola University, Chicago, the Classics Section presented a full and highly interesting programme on August 17 and 18. Some of the outstanding papers read at the meetings will be published in the CLASSICAL BULLETIN, beginning, in the present issue, with the first installment of *The Ninth Book of the Aeneid*, by Wm. R. Hennes, the veteran retiring secretary. The attendance at the Classics Section was more numerous and the enthusiasm ran higher than ever before at these annual gatherings, which have come to mean so much in the way of inspiration and encouragement to many Jesuit teachers of the classics in the Middle West. After three years of faithful and self-sacrificing service, the Rev. Francis Deglman, of Creighton High School, Omaha, Neb., retired from the presidency of the M. P. C. A., and the Rev. Joseph A. Walsh, of Milford, Ohio, was elected to succeed him, with the Rev. Alphonse M. Zamara as secretary. The editors of the CLASSICAL BULLETIN look forward to another banner year in the life of the Association and bespeak the co-operation of all the members in making the BULLETIN an ever more useful auxiliary in our work of classical teaching.

In the School of Philosophy and Science of St. Louis University there was formed last September a "Philosophers' Classical Academy," the programme of whose first year of existence promises well for the future of classical studies among the rising generation of Jesuit

teachers. With a membership of thirty, the Academy presented the following programme: Oct. 15—*The De Oratore*, by Mr. Wilson; Oct. 29—*Thucydides*, by Mr. Rieckus; Nov. 24—*Lucretius, a Poetical Genius*, by Mr. Korfmacher, of the Classical Faculty of the University; Dec. 10—*The Republic of Plato*, by Mr. Ganss; Feb. 2—*Greek and English Poetry*, by Mr. Dollard; Feb. 18—*The Beauty of Greek Sound*, by Mr. Walsh; Feb. 23—*Christian Poets*, by Fr. Kuhnmueneh, head of the Latin Department; Mar. 11—*Coins*, by Fr. Heithaus; Apr. 8—*The Teaching of the Classics as Literature*, by Fr. Preuss, Dean of the College of Arts at Florissant; Apr. 29—*Jesuit Medieval Drama*, by Fr. McCabe, of the English Faculty.

A Note on Persius Sat. I, 92-102

Persius really satirizes in only one of his Satires—the first, in which he inveighs against the literary decadence of his day. Yet even here, there has been no little dispute over the exact interpretation of certain lines which the satirist quotes as glaring examples of contemporary literary ills. The lines referred to, arranged with Persius as *Magister* and the fictitious interlocutor as *Auditor*, are the following:

- 92 A. Sed nuzeris decor est et iunctura addita crudis.
eludere sic versum didicit Berecynthius Attis
et qui caeruleum dirimebat Nerea delphin,
95 sic costam longo subduximus Appennino.

M. 'Arma virum'—nonne hoc spumose et cortice pingui,
ut ramale vetus vegrandi subere coctum?
quidnam igitur tenerum et laxa cervice legendum?

- A. Torva Mimalloneis impleverunt cornua bombis,
100 et raptum vitulo caput ablatura superbo
Bassaris et lynceum Maenas flexura corymbis
euhion ingeminat, reparabilis adsonat echo.

With what is Persius finding fault? Conington, in his comment on the first passage (vv. 92-95), believes that "the image of the dolphin cleaving Nereus" is "grotesque." But Gildersleeve counters with the explanation that *Nereus* is a simple poetic variant for *water*, adding, "The use, which Conington calls 'grotesque,' is almost as 'grotesque' as *Vulcanus* for *fire*."

The second passage (vv. 99-102) is a source of endless speculation. The Scholiast says, *Hi versus Neronis sunt*.¹ However, it makes little difference whether the lines are Nero's or not, as far as the literary defects Persius sees in them are concerned. Hence, again, with what is Persius finding fault?

In general, as Gildersleeve has pointed out, "It is enough for us to know that to the ear of Persius the lines lacked masculine vigor. The multiplication of diaereses, the length of the words, the careful avoidance of elision, the dainty half-rhyme of *bombis* and *corymbis*, the jingle of *ablatura* and *flexura*, may be cited as confirmations of the view of Persius."

More particularly, it has been said that *Berecynthius Attis* suggests Catullus 63, the famous *Attis* poem, and that the spondaic ending *Appennino* suggests the style of Catullus, who under Alexandrine influence affected this feature of Greek rhythm. The whole of the first

passage has a Greek ring; as the Scholiast puts it, "Hi versus exempli causa ponuntur. Non sunt autem Persii, sed poetae nescio cuius graecissantis." No less Greek is the character of the second passage. Further, the verse

Torva Mimalloneis implerunt cornua bombis,

has been compared to Catullus 64, 263:

Multis raucisonos effabant cornua bombos.

Now the mere fact that these passages are Greek in tone and diction is, to Persius, enough to condemn them.² But here a further interesting possibility looms up. Persius was an ardent and deeply respectful disciple of his Augustan predecessor Horace, who had anticipated his antagonism to the practice of interlarding Latin words with Greek.³ Accordingly, Persius in the passage under discussion may be simply reproducing what he believes to have been Horace's attitude towards Catullus; for Horace, speaking of the writers of Old Comedy, as forerunners of Satire, remarks:

quos neque pulcher
Hermogenes unquam legit, neque simius iste
nil praeter Calvum et doctus cantare Catullum.
Serm. 1, 10, 17-19.

Defenders of Catullus hold, perhaps rightly, that Horace, in spite of the slur in the last line just quoted, need not have been distinctly hostile to Catullus' poetry as a whole. On the other hand the two spirits were not entirely kindred, for while Catullus was in taste a Hellenist rather than a Greek, Horace drew much of his inspiration from the old Greek models. In this connection, the passage from Persius has not perhaps received sufficient consideration. The satirist's "glaring examples" are strongly reminiscent of Catullus, and it is not at all unlikely that he is here voicing a feeling of hostility for Catullus which he believes to have had the support of his predecessor and model, Horace.

St. Louis, Mo.

WILLIAM C. KORFMACHER

NOTES

1. This is but one of many supposed attacks on Nero in the *Liber Saturae*. Kukula, in *Persius und Nero*, scents allusions to Nero everywhere. Pretor, in *A. Persii Flacci Satirarum Liber*, xiv-xvii, believes Nero is assailed in the first and fourth Satires.
2. He despises those *nugari solitos graece*, Sat. 1, 70; he is weary of the Phyllises and Hypsipyles of the poets; *ibid.* 33-34. By contrast, a passage from Quintilian, the Roman schoolmaster and critic, may be of interest: "The Greek language is so much more agreeable (*iucundior*) in sound than the Latin, that our poets, whenever they wish their verse to be especially melodious (*dulce*), adorn it with Greek words (*nominibus*)"; XII, x, 33.
3. Cf. Serm. 1, 10, 20-23:
'At magnum fecit, quod verbis Graeca Latinis
miscuit.' O seri studiorum! quine putetis
difficile et mirum, Rhodio quod Pitholeonti
contigit?

"For every student of the ancient Greek world, the theory and practice of Greek speaking and writing, as viewed by the Greeks themselves, must always have a special interest and value.—W. Rhys Roberts.

The Greek Spirit in Attic Red-figured Vases

The golden age of Pericles, Phidias and his Athena Parthenos, Ictinus, Callierates and the Parthenon, Sophocles and his *Oedipus Tyrannus*, are all inseparably linked together in our minds. Sculpture, architecture, and drama were the crowning artistic achievements of the heyday of the Greek genius. It was not, however, only on state occasions, such as the great festival of Dionysus, that the Athenian showed his artistic sense. His love of beauty was so innate, his demand for harmony of form so insistent, that he regarded the aesthetically pleasing not as a luxury, but as a necessity of life, so that even his ordinary domestic implements were turned into things of beauty. At all events, with the perfecting of the major arts went hand in hand the evolution of the minor art of vase painting in the style which we call red-figured, and it is noteworthy that the masterpieces of this art of ornamenting pottery show qualities that characterize Greek art generally. The study of the Greek red-figured vases is thus a short cut to the understanding of some of those elements that make Greek art what it is.

The shape of the vase varies, naturally, with the use to which it was put, whether it was to hold wine, or serve as a mixing-bowl, or as a drinking-cup, or as a perfume vessel, and so on, according to the diverse needs of daily life. There is always a graceful curve in the contour of the vase, which has often the added adornment of a delicate handle or two. The surface is coated with a black glaze, save where human figures in the beautiful light red color of the clay, set off against the black in graceful outline, are represented in some pose of dramatic import or in some action of ordinary daily life. Details, such as features, muscles, drapery, are in delicate black relief-lines, drawn on the red clay of the figures.

A study of earlier Greek vases reveals many parallels with the developing arts of sculpture and architecture, but it is these red-figured Attic vases, especially of the so-called fine style, that help one to understand some of the peculiar merits of the highest Greek art. As one of the qualities they illustrate for us, we may mention symmetry. Symmetry, or the due proportion between parts, or between a part and the whole, is essential to all art, and is conspicuous in the productions of Greek art. In drama, sculpture, and architecture, the perfect disposition of the various parts with reference to the artistic creation as a whole, has often been pointed out. Now this very quality is embodied in the harmonious grouping of the red figures on the glazed background, and conduces so much to our first agreeable impression of a Greek vase. The painter was able to attain this grouping by means of tentative sketching with a blunt-pointed instrument, before the black glaze was applied. Symmetry likewise implies grace of line, and perhaps nowhere in the whole range of Greek art is this perfection more evident than in the specimens we are here considering. The long struggles of the painters of the archaic and black-figured styles had bequeathed to the classic age a real mastery of the technique of drawing. This is manifested in the graceful contour of the figures set against

the blackened surface, and in the long relief-lines which show the folds of drapery and other details. One element of symmetry that must not be overlooked is the lovely shape of the vases, which is a conspicuous characteristic of this style, and is remarkable in contrast to later pottery. At no time was the symmetry in the form of Attic vases so consistent as in the fifth century. Not only the curved outlines of the vase are beautiful, but also the delicate handles, the attachment of which to the body of the vase is a triumph of the potter's art. It was this beauty of shape that drew from Keats his cry of admiration: "O Attic shape! Fair attitude!" Keats was a stranger to Greek literature in the original, but had access to the vases, true offspring of the Hellenic genius. Undoubtedly, a study of the latter helped him to discern even beneath the garb of translation the genuine spirit of the former. And for us, too, acquaintance with all this profusion of grace of line in the vases may mean an added appreciation of the same spirit in sculpture and architecture, and even in literature. With the perfect symmetry of outline in the vases before us, it will be easier for us to understand, for example, the perfectly balanced structure of a Greek tragedy, or of the orations of a later period, with their exordium and their final calm or, in another sphere, the grace of a Greek temple, in which not a single line is rigidly straight, but each, by a slight curve, is given a touch of elasticity.

Again, nowhere else is the characteristic Greek restraint more tangible than in these works of pottery. One of the most obvious marks of this restraint is the sacrifice of background for the sake of the more striking contour of the figures. The term plasticity, which signifies the characteristic quality of a statue as distinct from a painting, may here be applied to the art of painting itself. Painting and sculpture meet in these vases, and indeed, the sculptural qualities of simplicity, lack of background, and the sparing use of color predominate. A result of this blending of the two arts in the vases is the treatment of the less violent emotions, as well as the elimination of what is not essential in the portrayal of these emotions. As far as we can learn from some of the large vases and from literary sources, the qualities mentioned above were conspicuous also in the frescoes of Polygnotus and other masters. The use of but a few colors and the depicting of figures in calm and simple dignity, with little employment of background and perspective, seem to differentiate the major art of painting among the Greeks from later forms of painting. This is but another instance of that contrast between the Greek and the modern genius, so well exemplified by the Parthenon as opposed to Rheims, by the *Oedipus Tyrannus* as opposed to *King Lear*. An appreciation of this quality, so strikingly illustrated in Greek vases, is naturally helpful towards a somewhat keener discernment of its presence in Greek literature. And through the medium of Greek literature, the plastic creations of the Greek mind become a training ground for literary appreciation in general, and for the appreciation of modern literature in particular; for it is here that true literary excellence is apt to be overrun and obscured by a ro-

mantic exuberance of detail.

Lastly, the red-figured Greek vases reflect that interest in man which is part and parcel of the Greek outlook on life. Πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ, exclaimed Sophocles, echoing the sentiment of all Athens, καὶ δὲν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει. Man, compound of body and soul, was the ideal and inspiration of Greek art. It was a subject never to be exhausted. Not only did individual works of sculpture represent a perfect type of humanity, but whole pediments and friezes were covered with scenes of human life. The literature of the Greeks did not display the modern romantic love of nature; theirs was indeed a marvelously fresh appreciation of natural beauty, but beauty of nature was subordinate to the human interest. We need have no doubt that the mural paintings of Polygnotus did not, after the fashion of modern impressionism, display landscape devoid of human life. And how admirably the Greek vases evince this innate Greek interest in man! Even the archaic geometric style, in the Athenian Dipylon vases, shows scenes of human action. At the opposite pole, we see the early Corinthian vases, under Oriental influence, with monotonous friezes of animals and mere ornamentation in the form of rosettes, dots, and other devices. On the other hand there is not a vase of the red-figured style at Athens without a human figure. The sure means of distinguishing between the severe and the fine styles of red-figured vases, even when a study of details, such as the drapery or the movement of the figures, fails, is invariably found in the expression of the human face. The perfecting of the portrayal of the eye in profile came just at the full bloom of Greek art, and in the fine style the facial expression of the characters depicted shows depth of thought and emotion.

The creations of Greek art, once perfection had been attained, were all cast in the same mould: literature, painting, architecture, sculpture, vase-painting, all illustrate the same fundamental principles. A teacher of Greek drama or Greek oratory, therefore, may with profit spend some of his time in initiating his pupils into the excellences of Greek art, by exhibiting and explaining, say, some good pictures of red-figured Greek vases. In the mind of the Greek, life—that is, artistic life—was a complete and well-rounded unit; a fact that makes the teaching of Greek literature an interesting business; for Greek literature, no less than Greek architecture and sculpture and painting, is a cross-section of the same Greek spirit.

St. Louis, Mo.

WILLIAM P. WALSH, S. J.

It is gratifying to be able to chronicle the completion, after twenty-three years, of the great Oxford translation of Aristotle. This undertaking was begun in 1908 at the desire of Benjamin Jowett, the famous Master of Balliol and translator of Plato, who thought that the proceeds from the sale of his works might thus be best used for the promotion of Hellenic Studies. The complete Oxford Aristotle comprises eleven volumes. The tenth of the series contains Dr. Jowett's own translation of the *Politics*.

The Dualism of Cicero's Religion

Forsyth, in his *Life of Cicero* says that "Although on speculative questions, such as the nature of the gods, the Supreme Good, and similar subjects, he was more the expounder of the opinions of others than the asserter of his own, he was a firm believer in the great cardinal doctrines of a Providence and a future state. And he was also firm and decided in his views of moral obligation." It may be asked what real convictions underlay those innumerable references to the supernatural which are found in Cicero's works. In what respect was he what Forsyth calls "a firm believer in the great cardinal doctrines of a Providence and a future state"?

In trying to answer such questions as these, we should perhaps turn to the letters Cicero wrote to his friends and relatives, for here, if anywhere, it may be supposed that the man of the forum, the chief exponent of the New Academy, and the severe magistrate of Rome, stands unmasked, as he unburdens to his bosom friends the secret ambitions and cares of his heart. Let it suffice to call attention to one significant passage in the voluminous correspondence:

Nunc ad epistulam venio, cui copiose et suaviter scriptae nihil est quod multa respondeam. Primum enim ego illas Calvo litteras misi, non plus, quam has, quas nunc legis, existimans exituras: aliter enim scribimus, quod eos solos, quibus mittimus, aliter, quod multos lecturos putamus.

Cicero confesses that he writes *aliter* to some and *aliter* to others, and the question arises whether he refers to matter or to manner or to both. The context fails to dispel one's perplexity over this confession of double method of one kind or another.

Cicero's evasive attitude towards such topics as religion is directly responsible for the uncertainty which for ages has harassed scholars in regard to his religious convictions. How can one reconcile, for instance, his double adherence in the theological discussion in his *De Natura Deorum*, where the bone of contention is the existence of divine Providence? Does Cicero believe, or does he not believe, in the supernatural?

A clue to Cicero's religious convictions appears in his philosophy. Since he admits that he is a member of the New Academy, his philosophy is really an eclecticism based on scepticism. In his *Tusculan Disputations*, Bk. V, Ch. 4, he describes his position as follows:

Cuius (Socratis) multiplex ratio disputandi rerumque varietas et ingenii magnitudo, Platonis memoria et litteris consecrata, plura genera effecit dissentientium philosophorum. E quibus nos id potissimum consecuti sumus, quo Socratem usum arbitrabamur, ut nostram ipsi sententiam tegeremus, errore alios levaremus, et in omni disputatione quod esset simillimum veri quaereremus.

An unfavorably impressed spectator of the clash of philosophic systems, Cicero preferred to risk the high seas of speculation rudderless, rather than hazard his fortunes on an undeviating but possibly treacherous course. Let it be remembered, however, that he was not a sceptic in the vulgar sense of the term; not a sneerer at truth, but its earnest seeker. In the *Tusculan Disputations*, Bk. I, Ch. 5, he admits his philosophic scepticism. Although he does not belong, he claims, to that set of people for whom there is no such thing as truth, still

certain elements of falsehood are joined to all truth, with such semblance of truth, that in these matters there is no sure criterion for absolute assent. In plain words, the pinnacle of Cicero's speculative ambition is high probability, the *simillimum veri* mentioned above. His uncertainty in the field of philosophy was doubtlessly influenced by his professional experience in failing at times to reach a decision after carefully sifting all the available evidence. It is well to recall that Cicero was primarily a practical Roman, a lawyer and politician and magistrate; it was only secondarily that problems of philosophy claimed his attention by way of hobby. His practical propensities far outweighed the metaphysical.

Another explicit admission of scepticism occurs in Cicero's *Quaestiones Academicæ*, Bk. II, 31, 101:

Ut ei multa vera videantur, neque tamen habere insigne illam et propriam percipiendi notam;

and 99:

Itaque et sensibus probanda multa sunt, teneatur modo illud, non inesse in iis quicquam tale, quale non etiam falsum, nihil ab eo differens, esse possit.

Cicero's doubts clung to him throughout life, for the *Tusculan Disputations*, which contain one of his two professions of scepticism, were written in the last period of his life.

Nowhere, perhaps, is Cicero's mind with regard to the divinity better expressed than in the *De Natura Deorum*, Bk. I, Ch. 22. Cotta, at once Pontifex Maximus, chairman of the theological discussion, and representative of the New Academy, expounds the views of his school, to which Cicero elsewhere professes to subscribe.

Roges me, quid aut quale sit deus, auctore utar Simonide, de quo cum quaesivisset hoc idem tyrannus Hiero, deliberandi sibi unum diem postulavit; cum idem ex eo postridie quaereret, biduum petiit; cum saepius duplicaret numerum dierum, admiransque Hiero requireret, cur ita faceret, "Quia quanto diutius considero," inquit, "tanto mihi res videtur obscurior." Sed Simoniden arbitror . . . quia multa venirent in mentem acute atque subtilia, dubitantem quid eorum esset verissimum, desperasse omnem veritatem.

From Cicero's own pen, therefore, comes the evidence of his scepticism in speculative matters. Even "the great cardinal doctrines of a Providence and a future state" he left signed with a question mark. And yet, strange to say, elsewhere in his writings appear the most eloquent arguments for the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. Shall we be quick to pass the verdict of insincerity and disconcerting inconsistency on this seeker after truth? Let us first glance at his arguments for the supernatural.

In proof of a divinity, Cicero appeals in the *De Natura Deorum* to the demonstrative force of universal consent (II, 2-5), of order and design (5), to an intimation of the cosmological proof (6), to the argument from grades of being (12-14). In addition to this, the *Pro Milone* contains an appeal to the natural law, which presupposes a divine lawgiver. For the immortality of the soul, Cicero takes from Plato the so-called ontological proof, as found in the *Phaedrus*, namely, that the soul, since it moves itself, is eternal (*De Re Publica*, VI, 27); in the first book of the *Tusculan Disputations* he argues

from the authority of antiquity (12-16), from the universal belief of mankind (16-22), and lastly from the simplicity and unity of the soul (29). Add to these considerations his eloquent appeal to the hereafter in the last part of the *De Senectute*.

These are the valid arguments which Cicero adduces in proof of his twofold thesis; his other attempts, though objectively erroneous, yet claim at least a qualified assent. One thing is certain: Cicero was not an out-and-out atheist. He *at once doubts and believes* the basic doctrines of the existence of God and the immortality of the human soul, and he does this without contradicting his own principles.

Like the rest of the Roman elite, Cicero had no faith in the national gods. But his offices of Pontifex and of Augur forbade his disparaging publicly the empty ceremonial of the state religion. He dutifully set about watching the pecking of the sacred chickens and the gazing at the flight of birds, and there seemed to him no reason why he should disedify the credulous rabble by an open protest. After all, the Roman state perpetuated these religious practices partly out of fidelity to the *mos maiorum*, but principally because the *ius divinum* of regulating the affairs of religion was part and parcel of the constitution. To Cicero, as to most of the public men of the day, the state religion was merely a section of the law, and the law had, of course, to be maintained. To a Roman, maintenance of the law was a matter that needed no proof. Moreover, for a prosperous state to endure, there must be some kind of public morality; and morality in turn postulates the supernatural as a sanction of human conduct; the supernatural embracing a living God and a hereafter for the human soul. Cicero, therefore, who was an eminently practical statesman and an ardent patriot, was a firm believer in the supernatural, because such belief was a means to the end, essential to social and political welfare. This attitude was not arrived at by speculative thought, but dictated as a matter of practical expediency. But when this same man turned to speculation, and tried to find a logical foundation for his belief, he could not, because of his philosophical prepossessions, get beyond a high probability. He had to be satisfied with the *simillimum veri*, which, by its very essence, admits at least the shadow of doubt. In speculation, an eclectic and sceptic, he was for all practical purposes a convinced believer in God and Providence. Speaking as a philosopher, he speaks one way; speaking as a practical statesman, he speaks another way. This is the secret of his *aliter scribimus* referred to above. It is surely not for us to charge Cicero with double-dealing and insincerity. The will to believe was present, although the acumen of intellect, which might have seen the untenability of his philosophical scepticism, was denied him.

FLOYD A. BREY, S. J.

"Pure Greek suggests an ideal of Pure English for the great 'Common Dialect' of the modern English-speaking world."—W. Rhys Roberts.

The Greek Academy of Boston College

The Greek Academy of Boston College was founded in 1924 and since then has flourished with varying success. In the past school year, the Academy called for members in October, and twenty were enrolled, though in the course of the year the number fell to fourteen. The aims of the Academy were explained and an ambitious public program planned, including expositions of Theocritus, Pindar, Homer, Plato, and a dramatization, in English, of the *Odyssey* (adapted). The exposition of Plato and the staging of the *Odyssey* were dropped, owing to unforeseen circumstances. The other three expositions, one of which was held before several hundred students, the other two in the evening at the Philomatheia Club, near the college, met with great success. In addition to the presentation of the works of an author at these expositions, a suitable musical program was arranged, and interest was further heightened by brief dramatizations, in Greek costume, from the author presented.

In order that the members might have time to devote themselves to the work entailed by the public sessions, very little demand was made on them at the weekly meetings. With the exception of a month given to Euripides' *Cyclops*, the time of the weekly meetings was taken up by lectures by the members of the faculty, or essays by members of the Academy. The meetings rarely lasted more than an hour. Several lectures were devoted to Homer and to Greek tragedy. Other lectures embraced a variety of subjects, such as Excavation at Troy, the Differences between Modern and Ancient Greek, Horace's Debt to Sappho and Alcaeus.

M.

Books Received

From the Oxford University Press, New York:

Ludovicus Vives, Scenes of School and College Life in Latin Dialogues, edited by W. H. D. Rouse (*Lingua Latina Series*). 1931, \$1.00.

From Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press, New York:

A Short History of the Roman Empire, by J. Wells and R. H. Barrow, with eight maps. Pp. viii and 399. 1931.

From Silver, Burdett and Co., New York:

Latin—Fourth Year, by Harry Edwin Burton and Richard Mott Gummere. Pp. lv and 439 and 105. 1931, \$1.88.

"In regard to the appreciation and the practice of prose-writing, much may still be learnt from the ancient conception (too often ignored today) of prose as an art and an art closely related to that of poetry; from the stress laid on good taste, variety, and euphony; from the respect paid to *hellenismus*, or the use of pure Greek."—W. Rhys Roberts.

